

Chapter No. 2025
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***HOUSE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 50***

Originated in House



Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 50

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE COURAGE AND BRAVERY OF REVEREND RODNEY DUKE AND COMMENDING HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY, AND HIS SERVICE AS A MINISTER OF THE METHODIST FAITH.

WHEREAS, Reverend Rodney Duke has distinguished himself as both a minister of the Methodist faith, and as a fearless serviceman during his assignment on the U.S.S. Pueblo in the United States Navy; and

WHEREAS, born in Alabama on November 2, 1942, Reverend Duke, the only son of a Baptist minister, was one of seven children; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Duke moved with his family to Mississippi at the age of 19, and he graduated from Hinds Junior College with a degree in electronics; and

WHEREAS, after enlisting in the United States Navy in 1965, Reverend Duke was trained as a communications technician, and was one of 82 men assigned to the U.S.S. Pueblo, an electronic intelligence gathering ship; and

WHEREAS, on January 23, 1968, during Reverend Duke's first patrol of the ship, the U.S.S. Pueblo was attacked by North Korean forces, with one of the crewmembers perishing during the attack; and

WHEREAS, for over two hours, the U.S.S. Pueblo stealthily maneuvered to prevent the North Koreans from invading the ship; nevertheless, Reverend Duke and his 80 remaining crewmates were captured by North Korean Communist forces; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Duke and his crewmates were held as prisoners of the North Korean Communist forces for 11 brutal and excruciatingly difficult months; and

WHEREAS, while a prisoner of the North Koreans, Reverend Duke endured cruel, physically abusive and tortuous treatment, which left him with permanent disabilities; and

WHEREAS, during his capture, Reverend Duke resolved that if he were to survive and gain his freedom from the North Koreans, upon returning home, he would become a minister, and from that time, he steadfastly served his fellow prisoners to the best of his abilities; and

WHEREAS, on December 23, 1968, exactly 11 months from the date of being captured as prisoners, Reverend Duke and his crewmates were released by the North Korean Communist forces; and

WHEREAS, after returning home to Mississippi, Reverend Duke became a minister in the Methodist Church, just as he had decided during his time as a prisoner of the North Koreans, and he married

the former Alice Chesser of Jackson, Mississippi, and they are the parents of two sons; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Duke also resumed his education, returning to Hinds Junior College for a year, attending Millsaps College, and subsequently attending Belhaven College, where he ultimately earned his bachelor's degree; and

WHEREAS, a priceless contributor to his community, Reverend Duke has served for several decades as a pastor of the Methodist faith in numerous cities throughout Mississippi, and now resides in Collins, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Duke's enduring courage, bravery and tenacity reflect and uphold the noble traditions of the United States Navy, and his unwavering faith and conviction reflect and uphold the beliefs of the Methodist faith; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to honor heroic Mississippians such as Reverend Rodney Duke for his dauntless fortitude and his remarkable dedication to the United States of America and the people of the State of Mississippi, who are eternally appreciative, for without people like Reverend Duke, the freedom they know and love would not be possible:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby recognize the courage and bravery of Reverend Rodney Duke and commend his distinguished service in the

United States Navy, and his service as a minister of the Methodist faith, on behalf of this great nation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to Reverend Rodney Duke and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 6, 2018



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
February 8, 2018



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE